

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO
USELMLO
IV TRNAS BRIG, OBERURSEL
CINCUSAREUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 1050

CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, ELTN, US, UK, FR, UR, WB, GW, GE
SUBJECT: SOVIET APPROACH ON REICHSBAHN TARIFF

REF: (A) BONN 5345 DTG 251823Z MAR 77, (B) USBERLIN 0230 DTG
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1. SUMMARY: SOVIETS HAVE NOW MADE STATEMENT WHICH PLACES
SOLUTION REICHSBAHN TARIFF MATTER UNDER QUADRIpartite
AUSPICES BUT WE REMAIN SOMEWHAT WARY ABOUT ACCEPTING THE
PRINCIPLE OF COMPENSATING THE EAST GERMANS FOR AN OCCUPA-
TION SERVICE THEY HAVE BORNE FOR 31 YEARS. WE EXPECT
TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENTS WILL TAKE SOME MONTHS TO SETTLE.
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WE ANTICIPATE MAINTAINING THE SAME FREQUENCY OF TRAIN
SERVICE DESPITE THE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN THE
OCCUPATION COST BUDGET ENTAILED. END SUMMARY.

2. SOVIET EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY TYUTYUNOV, ACCOM-
PANIED BY PROTOCOL CHIEF SHOKIN, CALLED ON BRITISH
PROTOCOL OFFICER MARSHALL ON APRIL 5 TO DISCUSS REICHS-

BAHN TARIFF. TYUTYUNOV SPOKE IN RUSSIAN AND LEFT NO PAPER BEHIND.

3. TYUTYUNOV SAID THAT ALLIES WERE AWARE OF DECISION BY REICHSBAHNDIREKTION TO INTRODUCE NEW TARIFF CHARGES, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 1, 1977, FOR TRANSPORTING ALLIED FREIGHT AND PASSENGER TRAINS TO AND FROM WESTERN SECTORS OF BERLIN AND WITHIN WESTERN SECTORS. HE SAID INCREASED CHARGES WERE NECESSARY SINCE PREVIOUSLY EXISTING TARIFF DID NOT ADEQUATELY COVER GDR EXPENSES. TYUTYUNOV REFERRED TO TWO REICHSBAHN LETTERS TO ALLIES DATED NOVEMBER 8, 1976 AND FEBRUARY 18, 1977. HE ADDED THAT SOVIETS WERE IN FULL AGREEMENT WITH STEPS TAKEN BY GDR. TYUTYUNOV RECALLED THAT IN PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS OF THIS MATTER WITH ALLIED OFFICIALS, NO ONE HAD DISPUTED THAT PRESENT RATES WERE LOW -- PRACTICALLY "SYMBOLIC" -- AND NOT TRUE REFLECTION OF ACTUAL COST TO GDR OF TRANSPORTING ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL AND FREIGHT.

4. AT PRESENT TIME, TYUTYUNOV SAID, GDR CHARGED ALLIED FREIGHT TRAINS 25 PFENNIGS PER AXLE KILOMETER, WHILE FRG CHARGED DM 1.35. (COMMENT: FRG CHARGES, WHICH ARE BASED ON WEIGHT, DISTANCE AND EQUIPMENT CLASSES, ARE NOT AS EASILY COMPARED TO RB RATES AS TYUTYUNOV SAYS. END COMMENT). GDR HAD NOT RAISED TARIFF SINCE ITS INCEPTION, IN 1950 (COMMENT: ACTUALLY 1946, BEFORE GDR CAME INTO EXISTENCE), BUT FRG RATES ON OTHER HAND HAD INCREASED 440 PERCENT DURING THAT PERIOD. FURTHERMORE, CONFIDENTIAL

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GDR HAD RECEIVED NO PAYMENT AT ALL FOR TRANSPORTING ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL, WHEREAS FRG LEVIED CHARGE OF 80 PFENNIGS PER AXLE KILOMETER FOR SUCH TRAINS. TYUTYUNOV CLAIMED THAT UNDER NEW REICHSBAHN TARIFF CHARGES FOR ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL TRAINS WOULD BE SAME AS FRG -- 80 PFENNIGS PER AXLE KILOMETER; CHARGES FOR FREIGHT TRAINS WOULD BE 30 PERCENT CHEAPER THAN THOSE LEVIED BY FRG.

5. TYUTYUNOV SAID THAT IN SOVIET VIEW, MATTER WAS PURELY A FINANCIAL ONE WHICH WOULD BE RESOLVED MOST EXPEDITIOUSLY BY REFERRING IT TO REICHSBAHN AND BUNDESBahn. TYUTYUNOV EXPRESSED HOPE THAT IN "INTERESTS OF UNHINDERED TRANSPORTATION" OF ALLIED MILITARY FREIGHT AND PERSONNEL BETWEEN WSJ AND FRG AND WITHIN SECTORS, ALLIES WOULD TAKE NECESSARY STEPS TO ENSURE PAYMENT OF NEW TARIFFS WITH EFFECT FROM FEBRUARY 1. HE ASKED THAT MATTER BE RESOLVED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE "IN A SPIRIT OF TRUE UNDERSTANDING."

6. SOVIET APPROACH WAS POSITIVE IN TONE AND APPEARS

TO PROVIDE SATISFACTORY FOUR POWER UMBRELLA FOR
DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN REICHSBAHN AND BUNDESBAHN.
(WE SEE NO IMMEDIATE NEED FOR FURTHER DIALOGUE WITH
THE SOVIETS IN BERLIN ON THIS MATTER, AS BRITISH
MAY SUGGEST.) WE ARE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT THE
ACCEPTAANCE OF A TARIFF INCREASE OF ANY KIND AFFECTING
PASSENGER TRAINS MIGHT SERVE AS AN UNFORTUNATE
PRECEDENT. SAME LOGIC MIGHT LEAD TO A GDR REQUEST FOR
LUMP SUM ANNUAL PAYMENT FOR 100,000 ALLIED TRAVELLERS
WHO USE AUTOBAHN EACH YEAR. ACCORDINGLY, WE RECOMMEND
THAT THE THREE ALLIES IN BONN TAKE A LOOK AT THIS
ASPECT OF GDR REQUEST.

7. WE UNDERSTNAD THERE MAY BE SOME NEED FOR SEPARATE
CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE RAIL TARIFF SPECIALISTS OF
THE THREE ALLIED MILITARY COMMANDS IN GERMANY. DESPITE
TYUTYUNOV'S CLAIM THAT THE RB'S PROPOSED TARIFFS ARE
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EQUAL TO OR LOWER THAN THOSE OF THE DB, THEY ARE APPARENTLY
EQUAL TO OR HIGHER (REF C, PARA 8). ACCEPTING THESE MAY CAUSE NATO
COUNTRIES TO PRESS FOR HIGHER TARIFFS FOR THEMSELVES.
THERE MAY BE OTHER TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS. OUR EXPECTATION IS THAT
SUCH CONSIDERATION COULD CAUSE TECHVNNICAL DELIBERATION
TO LAST FOR SOME MONTHS.

8. ACCEPTANCE OF SOME REASONABLE TARIFF SCHEDULE,
AS FORESHADOWED REF A, WILL PROBABLY MEAN AN INCREASE
IN THE OCCUPATION COST BUDGET FOR TRAINS. WE TRUST
THAT FINANCIAL OFFICIALS IN THE FRG WILL ACCEPT THIS
INCREASE IN GOOD GRACE AS WE DO NOT WISH TO REDUCE
THE VOLUME OF OUR RAIL TRAFFIC TO AND FROM BERLIN.

9. USCOB CONCURS. GEORGE

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